General Assembly

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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[on the report of the Third Committee (A/56/572)]

56/115. Implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons: towards a society for all in the twenty-first century

The General Assembly,

Recalling the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and reaffirming the obligations contained in relevant human rights instruments, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women[1] and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,[2]

Recalling also its resolutions 37/52 of 3 December 1982, by which it adopted the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons,[3] 48/96 of 20 December 1993, by which it adopted the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, 49/153 of 23 December 1994, 50/144 of 21 December 1995, 52/82 of 12 December 1997 and 54/121 of 17 December 1999,

Recalling further all of its relevant resolutions on the equalization of opportunities for and the human rights of persons with disabilities, and those of the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions,

Recalling the United Nations Millennium Declaration adopted on 8 September 2000 by the heads of State and Government at the Millennium Summit of the United Nations,[4] and recognizing the need to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms of people with disabilities,

Noting with appreciation the actions of Governments to implement relevant sections of the Standard Rules and of relevant resolutions that give special attention to accessible environments and information and communications technologies, health, education and social services, employment and sustainable livelihoods, including the relevant activities of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations,

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[1] Resolution 34/180, annex.

[2] Resolution 44/25, annex.

[3] A/37/351/Add.1 and Corr.1, annex, sect. VIII, recommendation I (IV).

[4] See resolution 55/2.

Reaffirming the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits and their respective follow-up reviews,

Noting with appreciation the assessment by the Secretary-General of the implementation of the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits to promote the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities, ensuring their full participation and equality, as well as the measures undertaken by the United Nations system aimed at preventing disabling conditions,[5]

Noting the invitation made to the General Assembly by the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, held at Durban, South Africa, from 31 August to 8 September 2001, to consider elaborating an integral and comprehensive international convention to protect and promote the rights and dignity of disabled people, including, in particular, provisions that address the discriminatory practices and treatment affecting them,

Acknowledging the important role of non-governmental organizations in the promotion and protection of the human rights of persons with disabilities, and noting in this regard their work in promoting the elaboration of an international convention on the rights of disabled persons,

Noting with appreciation the valuable work of the United Nations Voluntary Fund on Disability in supporting the building of national capacities to promote the Standard Rules in order to create opportunities for sustainable livelihoods by, for and with persons with disabilities,

Noting with appreciation also the important contributions of subregional, regional and international seminars and conferences related to persons with disabilities,

Mindful of the need to adopt and implement effective policies and strategies to promote the rights and the full and effective participation of persons with disabilities in economic, social, cultural and political life, on the basis of equality, to achieve a society for all,

Welcoming initiatives to hold international conferences relating to persons with disabilities, including the Sixth World Assembly of Disabled Peoples' International, to be held in Japan in 2002,

Concerned that improvement of awareness of and sensitivity to disability issues and respect for the human rights of disabled persons has not been significant enough to improve the quality of life of persons with disabilities worldwide,

Expressing grave concern that situations of armed conflict continue to have especially devastating consequences for the human rights of persons with disabilities,

Recognizing the importance of timely and reliable data on disability-sensitive topics, programme planning and evaluation and the need for further development of practical statistical methodology for the collection and compilation of data on populations with disabilities,

Reiterating that technology, in particular information and communications technology, provides new possibilities for improving accessibility and employment for persons with disabilities and for facilitating their full and effective participation

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[5] See A/56/169 and Corr.1, paras. 25 and 26.

and equality, and welcoming the initiatives of the United Nations in promoting information and communications technology as a means of achieving the universal goal of a society for all,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General[6] on the implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons;[3]

2. *Welcomes* the many initiatives and actions of Governments and relevant United Nations bodies and organizations, including relevant Bretton Woods institutions, as well as non-governmental organizations, to enhance the rights of persons with disabilities and the further equalization of opportunities by, for and with persons with disabilities in all sectors of society;

3. *Notes with appreciation* the valuable work undertaken by the Special Rapporteur on Disability of the Commission for Social Development in monitoring the implementation of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities under his third mandate for the period 2000–2002, and also notes with appreciation the work of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in supporting the work of the Special Rapporteur;

4. *Encourages* Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and the private sector, as appropriate, to continue to take concrete measures to promote the implementation of relevant United Nations resolutions and agreed international standards concerning persons with disabilities, in particular the Standard Rules, and for the further equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities by focusing on accessibility, health, education, social services, including training and rehabilitation, safety nets, employment and sustainable livelihoods, in the design and implementation of strategies, policies and programmes to promote a more inclusive society;

5. *Calls upon* Governments to undertake all necessary measures to advance beyond the adoption of national plans for people with disabilities through, inter alia, the creation or reinforcement of arrangements for the promotion and awareness of disability issues and the allocation of sufficient resources for the full implementation of existing plans and initiatives, and emphasizes in this regard the importance of supporting national efforts through international cooperation;

6. *Encourages* Governments and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to continue to take practical actions, including public information campaigns, by, for and with persons with disabilities, with a view to increasing awareness of and sensitivity to disability issues, combating and overcoming discrimination against persons with disabilities and furthering their full and effective participation in society;

7. *Encourages* Governments to continue their support to non-governmental organizations contributing to the fulfilment of the implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons;

8. *Also encourages* Governments to involve persons with disabilities in the formulation of strategies and plans aimed at eradicating poverty, promoting education and enhancing employment;

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[6] A/56/169 and Corr.1.

9. *Urges* relevant bodies and organizations of the United Nations system, including relevant human rights treaty bodies and the regional commissions, as well as intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and institutions, to continue to work closely with the programme on disability of the Division for Social Policy and Development of the Secretariat in the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities, including activities at the field level, by sharing experiences, findings and recommendations on persons with disabilities;

10. *Urges* Governments to cooperate with the Statistics Division of the Secretariat in the continued development of global statistics and indicators on disability, and encourages them to avail themselves of the technical assistance of the Division to build national capacities for national data collection systems, including the compilation and dissemination of data on disabled persons, as well as the development of methods for data collection and disability statistics, as appropriate;

11. *Urges* Governments, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations to provide special protection to girls and women with disabilities, elderly people with disabilities and persons with developmental and psychiatric disabilities, with special emphasis on integrating them into society and protecting and promoting their human rights;

12. *Urges* Governments, in collaboration with the United Nations system, to give special attention to the rights, needs and well-being of children with disabilities and their families in the development of policies and programmes, including the implementation of the Standard Rules;

13. *Encourages* Governments, intergovernmental organizations, concerned non-governmental organizations and the private sector to continue to support the United Nations Voluntary Fund on Disability with a view to strengthening its capacity to support catalytic and innovative activities to implement fully the World Programme of Action and the Standard Rules, including the work of the Special Rapporteur, and to support activities to build national capacities, with emphasis on priorities for action identified in the present resolution;

14. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to support initiatives of relevant bodies and organizations of the United Nations system, as well as those of regional, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and institutions, for the promotion of all human rights of, and non-discrimination in respect of, persons with disabilities and the further implementation of the World Programme of Action, as well as their efforts to integrate persons with disabilities in technical cooperation activities, both as beneficiaries and as decision makers;

15. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his efforts in improving the accessibility of the United Nations for persons with disabilities, and urges him to continue to implement plans to provide a barrier-free environment;

16. *Welcomes* the preparations proposed by the Secretary-General in his current report[6] for the fourth quinquennial review and appraisal of the World Programme of Action in 2002, including the proposed framework for that review, and requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session, through the Commission for Social Development and the Economic and Social Council, a report on the findings and recommendations based on the review and appraisal, including a report on the implementation of the present resolution.

88th plenary meeting
19 December 2001